



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Maricopa County Community Health Improvement Plan 2012-2017

What is the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)?

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a community-wide action plan for addressing priority health issues in Maricopa County over the next five years. It identifies areas where we can have the largest impact on improving the quality of life for all Maricopa County residents, particularly the most vulnerable in our community, by reducing preventable illness and death.

*The Maricopa County CHIP is a community-driven action plan to impact **real-time, critical health issues** that are affecting the people we live with, work with, learn with, and care for everyday.*

How were the health priorities for Maricopa County identified?

In 2011, a team of community advisors guided staff from the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA) to determine health priorities for Maricopa County. This 18-month process included more than 1,000 residents, health professionals, and community partners. Upon completion, five public health issues rose to the top as the most critical to focus community-wide efforts over the next five years:

- ❖ Obesity
- ❖ Diabetes
- ❖ Lung Cancer
- ❖ Cardiovascular Disease
- ❖ Access to Health Care

Since these health priorities share similar risk factors and social determinants¹ of health, strategies are categorized by the following four areas: Nutrition; Physical Activity; Tobacco Use; and Linkages to Care. In June 2012, more than 80 participants gathered for the [Community Action Planning meeting](#) to set the key directions for developing the 2012-2017 CHIP.

¹ http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

How is the plan structured? What are ‘clouds’?

The Maricopa County CHIP uses a framework similar to [Arizona Chronic Disease Strategic Plan](#) and the [National Prevention Strategy](#), which align prevention strategies along four community sectors: *Where We Live (Community)*, *Where We Work (Worksites)*, *Where We Learn (Education)*, and *Where We Seek Care (Healthcare)*. This approach addresses chronic disease in places where people spend significant amounts of time. It emphasizes the importance of wellness and prevention in all aspects of our lives.

Our approach addresses chronic disease in places where people spend significant amounts of time. It emphasizes the importance of wellness and prevention in all aspects of our lives.

The Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) uses the term “clouds” to describe these different community sectors, referring to the computing concept of storing a large amount of data (i.e., resources) in a relatively undefined area. For example, the Worksite Cloud group includes a diverse mix of “resources” comprised of public and private organizations, employers, and non-profit agencies. Participants from this cloud will develop action plans associated with improving the five health conditions and outcomes within the realm of Worksites. In December 2012, participants came together in each of the clouds to begin the action-planning phase of the CHIP.

How does a community organization select what ‘cloud’ to participate in?

Participation may vary depending on the nature of an organization, its desired involvement, and available resources. Community partners may choose to work within one cloud or more. For example, a school district may choose to work on an initiative related to increasing physical education requirements in schools and another related to creating a worksite wellness model. In this scenario, the school district would participate in both the Education and Worksite cloud groups. Individual cloud workgroup meeting reports and leadership contact information is located on the [MCDPH Office of Performance Improvement website](#).

How will progress in the CHIP be measured?

All priority areas will have goals and measurements for improvement over the next five years. These will be tracked and reported on a quarterly basis. Based on the details of the CHIP report, the MCDPH evaluation team will provide both an ongoing progress report, as well as intermittent outcome evaluations. While some goals may not be measurable until the end of the five-year cycle, such as reducing the county obesity rate, other outcome goals are shorter-term. The evaluation team will be available to provide technical assistance to partners on an as-needed basis. Efforts that do not advance the progress of the CHIP will be revised as necessary as part of the evaluation process. In addition, external forces such as changes in policy may merit revisions of the CHIP activities.

What organizations from the community are participating in the CHIP?

Many participants are from organizations that have been involved since inception (the Community Health Assessment process), and others have joined as the Plan has taken shape. More than 200 individuals representing dozens of public and private organizations in Maricopa County are currently engaged in the CHIP process or have expressed interest in being informed. To join one of our four task forces—Worksites, Community, Education, or Healthcare—contact hipmc@mail.maricopa.gov or 602.506.6098.

Why can't MCDPH do the CHIP on its own?

Public health is more than just one agency—schools, hospitals, city planners, worksites, public safety agencies, medical professionals, policymakers, and more—all contribute to keeping our community healthy and safe. Declines in public health funding and pending changes to our healthcare system require us to develop more sustainable, collaborative solutions.

Tackling these health priorities and making a measurable dent in their outcomes over the next several years will not be easy... we can improve our odds dramatically by pooling our expertise and resources.

Tackling these health priorities and making a measurable dent in their outcomes over the next several years will not be easy; however, we can improve our odds dramatically by pooling our expertise and resources. MCDPH staff will work among the four cloud groups as active participants in the CHIP. The Department is also coming together internally to review programs and services, identify performance improvement opportunities, and improve relationships with the community.

How can my organization benefit by participating in the CHIP?

Whether your organization is large or small, health-related or not, the CHIP process brings together all those passionate about promoting health and wellness within their respective communities. The CHIP process provides a forum to share ideas and resources as well as to identify gaps and barriers to existing services.

Those participating in the action planning phase of the CHIP will work together to develop goals, objectives, and activities that will contribute to specific, measurable health improvement efforts. Partner contributions will be included in the CHIP as well as in communication efforts about the Plan to the greater community. MCDPH will provide leadership and coordination, evaluation technical assistance, policy expertise, data and statistics, and communication support throughout the process.

If an organization cannot take part in the action planning, how can they still be involved?

Improving health outcomes requires a community effort. You can help by spreading the word in your own organization/community about the impact of the work underway through the CHIP. MCDPH will send out quarterly progress updates on the CHIP once implementation begins in early 2013.

Who is overseeing this process?

The MCDPH Office of Performance Improvement (OPI) oversees the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Planning (CHA/CHIP) process under the guidance of Director Bob England, MD, MPH, as well as community leaders, policymakers, and leadership from the county and state health departments.

OPI is spearheading efforts to help MCDPH achieve national accreditation through the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#). The accreditation process enables MCDPH to identify performance improvement opportunities, improve management, develop leadership, and improve relationships with the community. Successful completions of the CHA and CHIP are pre-requisites to apply for accreditation. [Visit the OPI website](#) to learn more about this process.

CHIP VISION

Empowered communities working together to reach optimal health and quality of life for all.

For more information contact:

Eileen Eisen-Cohen, PhD, MSW

Performance Improvement Manager

Phone: 602-372-8424

eileeneisen-cohen@mail.maricopa.gov

